

PRESS RELEASE

House Armed Services Committee Bob Stump, Chairman

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE SUPPORTS CREATION OF DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Today, the House Armed Services Committee reported H.R. 5005, a bill to establish the Department of Homeland Security. Upon final passage, Chairman Bob Stump issued the following statement:

“Last month, President Bush proposed a sweeping consolidation of more than 100 separate homeland security-related government agencies into a new Department of Homeland Security. This proposal is a sound one that will bring needed focus to the federal government’s efforts to protect the American homeland. Today, the Armed Services Committee considered those portions of the President’s proposal within its jurisdiction, and made only minor changes necessary to improve the proposal.

“The legislation as reported by the committee transfers several activities within the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Energy (DOE) to the Department of Homeland Security. There, they will be used to counter weapons of mass destruction, analyze intelligence regarding threats against the homeland, and improve the nation’s ability to respond to emergency situations.

“In a bipartisan effort to improve the Administration’s proposal, the committee made changes to ensure that H.R. 5005 equips the new department to execute its homeland security mission. Specifically, the committee incorporated the Administration’s goals and recommendations to create the new department, but amended the proposal to protect the ability of the new Secretary to manage the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, ensure that no harm is done to DOD and DOE national security missions, and ensure that the new department extends proper priority and focus to research and development efforts to meet threats against our homeland.

“The road ahead is a long one - establishing a new major Department is no easy task. I am pleased that the House of Representatives is moving this legislation with all due speed.”

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As reported, functions transferred to the Department of Homeland Security by H.R. 5005 include:

- National Bio-Warfare Defense Center and Bio-Weapons Defense-Related Programs (DOD)
- National Communications System (DOD) - A program to ensure communications systems remain operational in the event of an emergency.
- Chemical and Biological National Security Programs (DOE) - Programs to develop the means to protect civilian populations and infrastructure in the event of a chemical or biological emergency.
- Anti-Nuclear Smuggling Programs (DOE) - Programs to build sensors and equipment to detect the smuggling of nuclear devices.
- Nuclear Assessment Program (DOE) - A program to analyze and assess the credibility of nuclear threats communicated to federal agencies such as the FBI.
- Environmental Measurements Laboratory (DOE) - A program to assess the impact on the environment of radiation released by a nuclear attack or accident.
- Energy Security and Assurance Program (DOE) - A program to protect against severe disruptions in the nation's energy supply by identifying threats, minimizing vulnerabilities, providing technical support during emergencies, and planning for recovery from incidents.
- National Infrastructure Simulation and Analysis Center (DOE) - A center to provide U.S. government and industry decision makers with the analytic predictive resources necessary to protect critical U.S. infrastructure.
- Transfer of operational control of nuclear incident response teams during certain emergency conditions (DOE)